

something more than this, he talked loosely
of "the sub-
stitution of public for private authority in the
education
and support of the young " No one, however,
could gather
precisely what he meant Then, while
the Committee,
set up, at his instance, on the revision of the
Basis, on his
lines, was still at work, with himself and
various allies as
members, he suddenly resigned in the
autumn of 1908
In his letter of resignation, he expressed
disagreement with
the Basis, since it did not include some sort of
endowment
of motherhood, it was a " miserable perversion of
Socialism"
and went on to state that the opportunity for
propaganda
among the British middle-class was
"now over" His
original stand had been for close co-operation by
the Society
with the Labour Party, and the running
and exclusive
support of Socialist candidates everywhere, to
which end
he got the Society to adopt a scheme in
January 1908
Yet, in May of that same year, he supported
a Liberal
candidate against a Socialist in N -W
Manchester, and
declared that he should resign if the Society
did not accept
his view that "it is not a political society, and its
membership
involves no allegiance to any political party "
As a matter
of fact, on this May letter he had been
hauled over the
coals, to be defended by Sidney Webb on
general grounds
of the desirability of tolerance, and the fact
that the Fabian
Society was not a political society
The incident of course, was complicated by
personal
action on the part of Mr Wells, which, with his

remarkable
sense of taste, he has set out, from his own
point of view,
in *The New Machiavelh* (published in 1911)
and in *Ann*
Vetomca In the first of these widely-read novels,
he did his
best not only to pillory the associates and
friends with whom
the episode had brought him into contact, but,
inferentially,
to cast a slur o\er the causes for which, at the
time, they had
thought he and they were working in
common So far
as the exceedingly spiteful picture of
themselves was con-